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HR



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National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

CONTENTS

LEBANON: Karami
reconsidering resignation 1

SPAIN: Leftists to
demonstrate in Madrid today 3

[REDACTED]

25X1

ICELAND-UK: UK to withdraw
from Iceland's fishing zone 6

[REDACTED]

25X1

PORTUGAL: Military plans to
improve internal security 8

[REDACTED]

25X1

USSR: New front
organization formed 10

ROMANIA: Bucharest launches
anti-emigration campaign 11

[REDACTED]

25X1

FOR THE RECORD 13

[REDACTED]

25X1

Approved For Release 2007/03/14 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028500010032-0



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Approved For Release 2007/03/14 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028500010032-0

National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

LEBANON

Prime Minister Karami has agreed to reconsider his decision to resign as a result of the cease-fire arranged yesterday by President Franjiyah and Syrian President Asad. Franjiyah—presumably under heavy pressure from the Syrians—had refused to accept the Prime Minister's resignation.

There is no evidence, however, that the cease-fire has taken hold.

Karami is now in a position to reassert himself in political negotiations which over the last several weeks have been conducted almost exclusively between Franjiyah and the Syrians. There is some evidence that Karami feared he was losing Syria's support and was frustrated over his inability to forge a united Muslim negotiating position. His resignation may have been intended to elicit Syrian endorsement and to force other Muslim leaders into greater flexibility.

Although Karami's announcement has eased concern—at least temporarily—that remaining government authority might collapse, there are as yet no signs that the warring factions have accepted the cease-fire. Franjiyah and Asad probably agreed to give each other considerable time to implement the accord, which apparently is only the broadest outline of a truce.

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Franjiyah's chances of gaining Christian acceptance of the accord are slim. Christian militias have gained considerable momentum over the last week, and apparently are preparing for new advances on Muslim areas in Beirut. Phalangist forces yesterday took over most of Quarantina, a Muslim slum near the port area. They also secured two bridges across the Beirut River, opening up their supply lines to the north.

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We have no evidence, however, to substantiate widely publicized claims by Interior Minister Shamun that 5,000 Palestinian troops and a large number of Syrian troops crossed into Lebanon yesterday.

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

Egypt has in the past few days been attempting to give the impression of intensive activity on the Lebanese crisis, but Cairo's actions thus far appear to be little more than talk. Following up a spate of public pronouncements during the weekend, Foreign Minister Fahmi said on Sunday that Egypt itself or the Arab League would undertake an effort "to avert a civil war." He said, however, that this must be preceded by a cease-fire and a specific request from the government of Lebanon.

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National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

SPAIN

Spanish leftists will demonstrate in Madrid today in a bid to politicize the current labor unrest and to test the new government's willingness to tolerate dissent.

The rally was called last week by the two major coalitions of the leftist opposition, the Communist-dominated Democratic Junta and the Socialist-led Platform of Democratic Convergence. The two coalitions apparently hope to take advantage of the current strikes and to press demands for a national referendum on the country's form of government, for amnesty for all political prisoners, for return of political exiles, and for recognition of the rights of ethnic groups such as the Basques and Catalans. Some leftists may hope to provoke strong government countermeasures, including bloodshed, in order to discredit the new government and its proclaimed tolerance of orderly dissent.

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[REDACTED] So far, Fraga's security forces have relied primarily on tear gas and smoke bombs to disperse crowds.

Rail services in Spain quickly returned to normal yesterday after the government issued an edict drafting all railway personnel, making them liable to military discipline if they refused to return to work. Preparations also were completed, according to press sources, to draft subway workers in Madrid if they follow through on threats to strike again. The government has said it will negotiate with public utilities workers, but will not tolerate disruption of services. [REDACTED]

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Although strikes continue in several industries, there are some indications that the labor unrest has passed its peak. Striking construction and port workers have begun to return to work after winning pay raises that may be close to 20 percent—3 or 4 percent higher than the current wage ceiling allows. Telephone services also are back to normal, although negotiations are still under way. [REDACTED]

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Approved For Release 2007/03/14 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028500010032-0

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2007/03/14 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028500010032-0

National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

ICELAND-UK

Britain agreed last night to withdraw its frigates and its reconnaissance aircraft from Iceland's unilaterally declared 200 mile fishing zone, according to press reports.

The announcement followed a meeting between British Foreign Secretary Callaghan and NATO Secretary General Luns. Callaghan warned that British frigates would return unless Iceland agreed to stop harassing British trawlers.

Earlier in the day, Iceland had announced that Reykjavik would break diplomatic relations with London at midnight on Saturday unless Britain withdrew its frigates from Iceland's disputed waters. The ultimatum also stipulated that British reconnaissance aircraft, which have been tracking Iceland's patrol boats, be grounded.

Luns was apparently able to convince Callaghan that the Icelandic government is in no mood for compromise. Luns came away from a meeting last week in Reykjavik "appalled" by Icelandic intransigence. In addition, a majority of participants in a North Atlantic Council meeting yesterday called on Britain to withdraw its frigates as a first step toward getting negotiations off the ground.

The British decision also reflects London's desire to avoid involving NATO in the dispute. Iceland earlier had threatened to recall its NATO ambassador if no progress resulted from breaking relations with London.

Britain has reportedly called for an emergency North Atlantic Council meeting today, presumably to discuss the next steps toward a solution of the cod war. Callaghan also said Icelandic Prime Minister Hallgrimsson would be invited to London for talks with British Prime Minister Wilson.

London will probably press for a guarantee that Iceland will refrain from harassing unprotected British trawlers. Britain will also be looking for some sign of flexibility from the Icelandic government on the size of the British annual catch.

Claiming that fish stocks are dangerously depleted, Reykjavik has so far refused to budge beyond 65,000 tons. London has been pressing for 130,000 tons but has indicated on several occasions a willingness to compromise.

Iceland will drive a hard bargain if Wilson and Hallgrimsson meet and negotiations are resumed. Hallgrimsson will be under extreme domestic pressure not to give in to the British. Emotions in Iceland are running higher during the current dispute than during past cod wars, and the Prime Minister is already in hot water for his restrained policies.

25X1

Approved For Release 2007/03/14 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028500010032-0

National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

Hallgrimsson's Independence Party promised during the election campaign in 1974 to take a hard line on the fishing issue. Both leftists and conservatives feel that the government has made too many concessions already.

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Approved For Release 2007/03/14 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028500010032-0

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese military have formulated plans that could improve internal security.

The paramilitary National Republican Guard and Public Security Police plan to take over several internal security functions. The army, which assumed most internal security duties after the revolution in April 1974, will deal only with civil disturbances when requested by civilian authorities or during an emergency when no civilian authority is available.

To cope with potential disturbances, two elite companies will occupy barracks near the presidential palace in Lisbon. Some of these shock police have received special training in the UK. To augment these two companies and to prepare for potential trouble in the north, at least three National Republican Guard or police companies in the Lisbon and northern military regions will be designated civil disturbance forces. One company will be on alert, and the other two will be in training at all times.

The army also is preparing for internal security duty. A select group of middle-grade army officers will receive training from the British and then be assigned to national and regional military or paramilitary staffs. These officers will most likely serve as directors and instructors in riot control. Army units in each of the four military regions will begin internal security training immediately.

Military planners intend to establish guidelines for both troops and demonstrators. Government forces will be directed to use the minimum force necessary to maintain order and to use firearms only as a last resort.

The increased use of paramilitary forces should result in better training in crowd control and further remove the military from direct intervention in public affairs. Demonstrations such as those that occurred over the weekend will probably occur with increasing frequency as elections approach. The proposed plans in themselves are not likely to improve internal security enough to curb any determined leftist or Communist move to create havoc prior to the April elections. The government's apparent resolve to maintain order and the left's caution in the aftermath of the November 25 uprising, however, should greatly reduce the likelihood of serious leftist provocations.

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National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

USSR

The Soviet Union has established another front organization to foster relations with compatriots abroad, according to Soviet press reports.

The new organization, the Soviet Society for Cultural Links with Compatriots Abroad—or Rodina (Motherland) Society—was established at an all-union conference in Moscow on December 15. *Pravda* implied that similar organizations have been established, or will be established, in each republic. *Izvestia* said that V. N. Stoletov, a former candidate-member of the Soviet party's Central Committee with a reputation for conservatism, is the chairman of the Society.

The *Pravda* and *Izvestia* articles make it clear that the Society is new. Neither, however, makes any reference to the Soviet Committee for Cultural Relations with Compatriots Abroad, which was established in 1963. In what way, if any, the Society is related to the Committee is unclear from the press reports.

The purpose of both groups appears to be the same—to publish magazines and newspapers that will spread the "truth" about developments in the Soviet Union among "progressive" emigres. The audiences of the two groups, however, seem to be different. The Committee was apparently intended to concentrate on emigrants who had left before the revolution and on their descendants.

Stoletov, in the *Izvestia* article, implied that the Society would direct its attention to post-revolution emigrants. He described those who for "various reasons" did not return to the USSR from Germany after World War II as still "devoted to their fatherland," a departure from the previous practice of regarding them as traitors.

The short name for the Society, Rodina, has overtones of Russian nationalism. In the early 1970s, a number of reports claimed that a Rodina Society existed within the USSR as a clandestine organization with strong political support. It was usually described as chauvinistic and anti-Semitic.

The choice of name suggests that the Society will concentrate more on ethnic Russian emigres than Slavs in general. The *Izvestia* article suggests that emigre groups in the US, Canada, Belgium, and the Netherlands will be the Society's main targets.

National Intelligence Bulletin

January 20, 1976

ROMANIA

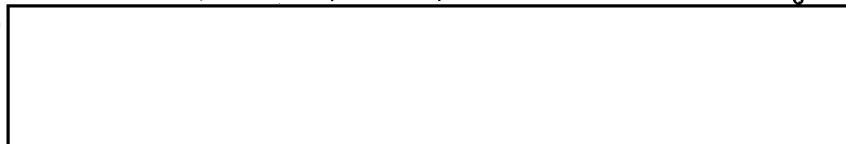
Romania has launched a campaign against emigration to the West that is intended to dampen the rising expectations of its citizens for freer movement and internal liberalization. The drive has steadily gained force since last month, when President Ceausescu publicly characterized emigrants as "deserters."

According to the US embassy, the party daily *Scinteia* and other periodicals are stressing that economic difficulties in the West prevent emigres from finding work. They are also extolling the virtue of Romanian patriotism. Other articles are replaying interviews with those who have left the country only to regret it later.

Embassy officials have learned of a new Central Committee directive that requires local journalists who write on Western culture to stress the decadence, "alienation," and "destruction of the human personality" that occurs in non-communist countries.

Romanian officials are not stopping at propaganda in their efforts to discourage potential emigres. Since mid-December, for example, many applicants for emigration have had to endure grueling counseling sessions with teams of local officials who try to persuade them to change their minds.

The anti-emigration campaign reflects the dichotomy between Romania's desire for good relations with the West, particularly the US, and the need to maintain tight domestic controls.



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National Intelligence Bulletin

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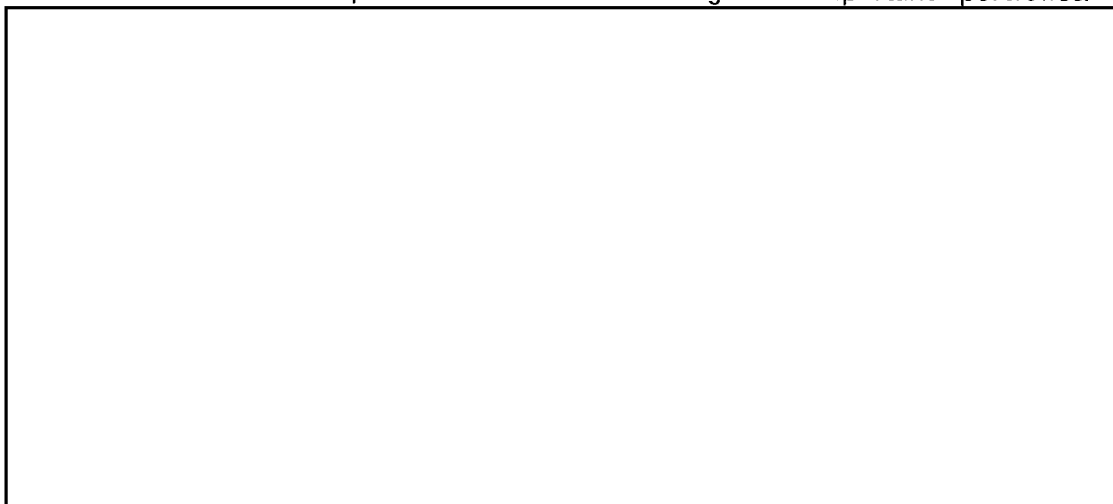


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VIETNAM: The Vietnamese communists announced yesterday that nationwide elections for a joint national assembly will be held on April 25. The elections are the next step toward formal reunification, which could occur as early as May to mark the first anniversary of the communist take-over in South Vietnam. The assembly will formally approve the new government of Vietnam, which is expected to include representatives of the North and the South, but with the communist leadership in Hanoi controlling the important portfolios.

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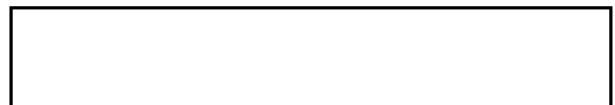
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